

his idol, a Moloch to which he sacrificed himself and everything else. A similar streak of fanaticism glows hot and distorting in the cold atmosphere of Proust. He too, amid all his disillusion, speaks of his processes of artistic introspection as a *devoir*; he too regards the world as a mere dust-storm, worthless except as lit up at a distance by the magic lantern of memory. X'homme ne peut imaginer ce qu'il possède'—Flaubert wrote that: but it might stand as the motto of *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. Yet is it really true? Is it necessary thus to sacrifice the real world as a worthless carcass on the altar of the imaginary? Is it not possible to make the best of both? Blake found it so:

With my inward eye, 'tis an old Man grey;
With my outward, a Thistle across my way.

Surely there is something morbid in eyes that can only see what the hands cannot reach; in the passion that can only embrace the phantoms of the past? All the gold in the world does not lie at the foot of the rainbow. It seems * to me one of the supreme qualities of Hardy that he could find poetry even in the milestone on his road or the log upon his fire. For as Heraclitus said of the pots and pans in the kitchen: 'Here also are the Immortals.'

For the Greek, Apollo was a god not only of the arts, but of medicine and battle, dealing real wounds and healing them; what a god thus joined, the real and the ideal, it is folly for man to put asunder. Pegasus cannot

live wholly in the air, or on it.

There lies, it would seem, a perversion of primeval instincts behind such manias about Art. Deep in us, since the very birth of life on earth, lie two fundamental impulses—that to preserve ourselves and that to sacrifice ourselves, in order to preserve our offspring, our herd, our race. Without both no species could hope to survive.